

TECHNICAL NOTES

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

NEVADA

SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE

TN - BIOLOGY - NV- 28

MAY 1990

Pronghorn

The attached technical note, issued by Wyoming, is transmitted to you for incorporation into Nevada Technical Notes - Biology series. Please record the Nevada number in your Biology Index.



Jim W. Doughty
State Resource Conservationist

TECHNICAL NOTES

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

WYOMING

SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE

Biology No. 114

January 1986

Subject: PRONGHORN*

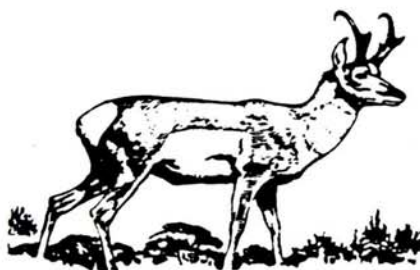
General

The pronghorn (Antilocapra americana) is most often found in grassland prairies and sagebrush flats. They are sometimes found in areas with scattered trees and large openings.

Food Requirements

Foods utilized by the pronghorn vary seasonally depending on the availability, palatability, and succulence of vegetation. Individual needs and preferences also influenced the animal's diet in Colorado.

Browse plants were found to be important foods for pronghorns in southeastern Montana where various species of sage, especially big sagebrush (Artemisia tridentata), were utilized. Other browse species used included bitterbrush (Purshia tridentata), saltbush (Artiplex spp.), snowberry (Symphoricarpus spp.), greasewood (Sarcobatus spp.), and rabbitbrush (Chrysothamnus spp.). Consumption of browse by pronghorn is usually highest during the fall (70 percent of diet) and winter (55 percent of diet) seasons. Consumption of forbs is highest during spring (50 percent of diet) and summer (65 percent of diet). The higher consumption of browse is associated with its higher palatability and nutrient content during fall and winter as compared to forbs and grasses.



Prepared by: Richard Rintamaki, State Biologist


State Resource Conservationist

*Information taken from Ecoregion M3113 Handbook and Habitat Suitability Index Models, Wildlife Species Narratives (literature searches), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, various dates between 1978-1985.

Reproductive Requirements

Optimal pronghorn kidding grounds are found in basins surrounded by a low ridge of hills where standing vegetation averages 9 to 18 inches (22.5 cm to 45.0 cm) tall. Low ground cover enables the does to observe the location of their young and provides excellent camouflage for the fawns. The basin type of topography also provides the does with good visibility when observing the young.

Special Habitat Requirements

Foraging areas free of snow are necessary for the pronghorn during severe winters. When their normal feeding grounds became snow covered, pronghorns move to steeper ridges where stands of vegetation are more exposed.

Interspersion Requirements

Grassland and sagebrush vegetative types are preferred by the pronghorn. Movement between these two vegetative types in Montana usually occurred when snow covered the ground. Home range for the pronghorn in the winter in Montana varied from 729 acres (291.6 ha) for young to 3,542 acres (1,416.8 ha) for adults. The size of the home range was found to depend on the topography, physical barriers, and amount of available food in the area.